

navigation; and to update its recommendations regularly with a view to bringing them in line with European Union regulations on inland waterway navigation.

Official languages: German, French, Russian.
Headquarters: Benczúr utca 25, H-1068 Budapest, Hungary.
Website: <http://www.danubecom-intern.org>
email: secretariat@danubecom-intern.org
President: Milovan Božinović (Serbia).
Director-General: István Valkár (Hungary).

European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Established in 1973, the ETUC is recognized by the EU, the Council of Europe and EFTA as the only representative cross-sectoral trade union organization at a European level. It has grown steadily with a membership of 82 National Trade Union Confederations from 36 countries and 12 European Industry Federations with a total of 60m. members. The Congress meets every four years; the 11th Statutory Congress took place in Seville in May 2007.

Address: 5 Boulevard Roi Albert II, B-1210 Brussels, Belgium.
Website: <http://www.etuc.org>
email: etuc@etuc.org
General Secretary: John Monks (UK).

Amnesty International (AI)

Origin. Founded in 1961 by British lawyer Peter Benenson as a one-year campaign for the release of prisoners of conscience, Amnesty International has grown to become a worldwide organization, winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977.

Activities. AI is a worldwide movement of people campaigning for human rights. It acts independently and impartially to promote respect for internationally recognized human rights standards.

Historically, the focus of AI's campaigning has been: to free all prisoners of conscience (a term coined by Peter Benenson); to ensure a prompt and fair trial for all political prisoners; to abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments; to end extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances'; to fight impunity by working to ensure perpetrators of such abuses are brought to justice. AI is independent of any government or political ideology, and neither supports nor opposes the views of the victim it seeks to protect.

AI has over 2.2m. members, subscribers and regular donors in more than 150 countries. Major policy decisions are taken by an International Council comprising representatives from all national sections. AI's national sections, members and supporters are primarily responsible for funding the movement. During the financial year 1 April 2005–31 March 2006 AI's total income was £32,534,000.

Every year AI produces a global report detailing human rights violations in all regions of the world.

International Secretariat: Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK.
Website: <http://www.amnesty.org>
Secretary-General: Irene Khan (Bangladesh).

Bank for International Settlements (BIS)

Origin. Founded on 17 May 1930, the Bank for International Settlements fosters international monetary and financial co-operation and serves as a bank for central banks.

Aims. The BIS fulfils its mandate by acting as: a forum to promote discussion and facilitate decision-making processes among central banks and within the international financial community; a centre for economic and monetary research; a prime counterparty for central banks in their financial transactions; and an agent or trustee in connection with international financial operations.

Finance. As of 31 March 2007 some 130 central banks and other official monetary authorities, as well as a number of international institutions, made active use of BIS financial services. Total currency deposits amounted to SDR 222bn., representing around 6% of world foreign exchange reserves.

Organization and Membership. There are 55 member central banks. These are the central banks or monetary authorities of Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, UK and USA, as well as the European Central Bank.

The BIS is administered by a Board of Directors, which is comprised of the governors of the central banks of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and the UK and the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the US Federal Reserve System as *ex officio* members, each of whom appoints another member of the same nationality. The Statutes also provide for the election to the Board of not more than nine Governors of other member central banks. The Governors of the central banks of Canada, China, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the President of the European Central Bank are currently elected members of the Board.

Headquarters: Centralbahnplatz 2 and Aeschenplatz 1, CH-Basle, Switzerland.

Website: <http://www.bis.org>

email: email@bis.org

Chairman of the Board of Directors: Jean-Pierre Roth (Switzerland).

Representative Office for Asia and the Pacific: 78th Floor, Two International Finance Centre, 8 Finance Street, Central, Hong Kong SAR, People's Republic of China.

Representative Office for the Americas: Torre Chapultepec, Rubén Darío 281, Col. Bosque de Chapultepec, 11580 México, D. F., Mexico.

Further Reading

Deane, M. and Pringle, R., *The Central Banks*. London and New York, 1995

Fleming's *Who's Who in Central Banking*. London, 1997

Goodhart, C. A. E., *The Central Bank and the Financial System*. London, 1995

Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is a free association of sovereign independent states. It numbered 53 members in 2007. With a membership of